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**Information & Communication Technologies as Tools to Facilitate the
Right to Information: the Case of Federal Government in Mexico**

INTRODUCTION

The most relevant component for the implementation of the Federal Law for Transparency & Access to Information (**LAI**) in Mexico approved in 2002 and enacted in June 2003 has been the use of Internet technology. So far, nothing has proven to be more important.

The goal of the LAI is to guarantee citizens' right to access government information, and increase transparency and accountability in the Federal Government. The law also clearly establishes that *anyone* can request information from the Mexican government, whether or not you are a citizen of Mexico. The law itself establishes that access to government information should be facilitated through the use of advanced technologies. Three major information tools were developed to facilitate the exercise of these new information rights; all three ICT show the extent to which advanced electronic information technology can encourage, simplify and broaden access to government information.

A significant feature of the LAI in Mexico is the creation of the Federal Institute for Access to Public Information (**IFAI** for its acronym in Spanish), an independent body charged with regulating, monitoring and enforcing the application of the LAI. The jurisdiction of the IFAI is limited to the Executive Branch, which is comprised of more than 240 agencies and programs, 2.8 million public

servants, and 95% of the federal budget. Currently, this legislation does not regulate information access in state and local governments, though all 31 states and the Federal District have implemented their own LAIs.

The IFAI works in a manner very similar to an administrative court of appeals. When an agency response to an information request is unsatisfactory, applicants can easily complain to the IFAI to intervene in order to determine whether or not the initial agency response was appropriate, and when applicable, mandate the disclosure of the information by the agency. One of the main advantages to the Mexican LAI is that requestors can easily appeal to the IFAI directly without the need for lawyers or advanced technical knowledge.

ICT FOR TRANSPARENCY AND ACCESS TO INFORMATION

The first tool developed is the **Information Request System** (*Sistema de Solicitudes de Información, SISI*, www.sisi.org.mx), which allows any person to request information from the Federal Government (entirely through the Internet) follow-up on the request, retrieve the agency's response through the web, and eventually file an appeal if the response is unsatisfactory. This allows for information requests to be submitted from anywhere in the world, at any time.

The entire target population for these electronic tools is essentially anyone who has an interest in knowing more about how government works in Mexico. However, looking inward, the main target population within Mexico is the portion of the population with access to the Internet who has an interest in requesting information from the government. Estimates show that over 15 million people in Mexico have consistent access to the Internet, which represents approximately 15.3% of the total Mexican population of 105 million. We will look at complications due to inequality in access to information technology later.

Official IFAI statistics show that, from the 12th of June, 2003 through October 11th, 2007, there have been over 250,000 information requests submitted to the Executive Branch. 95.5% of those requests have been submitted electronically. Over 12,000 appeals have also been filed to the IFAI.

Electronic requests, responses, and appeals filed to the IFAI through October 11th, 2007						
	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	TOTAL
ELECTRONIC REQUESTS	22,488	35,055	47,874	57,739	75,777	238,933
WRITTEN REQUESTS	1,609	2,677	2,253	2,474	2,075	11,088
TOTAL REQUESTS	24,097	37,732	50,127	60,213	77,852	250,021
ELECTRONIC RESPONSES	19,831	31,744	42,673	51,169	65,356	210,773
RESPONSES THROUGH OTHER MEANS	1,445	2,369	1,925	1,929	1,596	9,264
TOTAL RESPONSES	21,276	34,113	44,598	53,098	66,952	220,037
APPEALS FILED TO THE IFAI	635	1,431	2,639	3,533	3,977	12,215

Many of the requests are about results of substantial activities of the federal agencies (8.7% of the total in 2006); information on procurement and contracts (7.8%); information on procedures for citizens (5.7) and paychecks and salaries of officials (4.3%).

The technology behind SISI's electronic request system has also been transferred to several local-level governments, through an advanced technology known as *Información Mexicana (Infomex, www.infomex.org.mx)*. This technology received in 2005 a grant from the World Bank for its development, it allows local governments to adapt the system to their own particular needs and local information access legislation. Infomex has been implemented in response to demand by local governments to provide users accessible means for requesting information at the state and municipal levels.

A recent Constitutional reform that extends the scope of the right to information mandates all local governments to adopt ICT as tools to provide access to government records. So the main future goal is to implement Infomex in as many state and local governments as possible. Currently, Mexico City and Chihuahua governments are using Infomex or are in the process of implementing the program. Infomex transfer to the states of Jalisco, Aguascalientes, Baja California and Nuevo León is underway.

Let us look into the second toll. To facilitate access to previous information requests, an advanced web-based search engine was developed, known as **ZOOM** (www.ifai.org.mx), which allows any interested party to consult all electronic information requests that have been submitted through SISI (more than 250,000 requests to date). **ZOOM** permits users to easily search, (by keyword, phrase, date, or agency) the universe of electronic information requests submitted to the Federal Executive Branch, their corresponding responses from government agencies, and any appeals that have been filed, along with their resolutions. **ZOOM** has served to greatly facilitate the work of specialists and academics, as well government agencies who can now easily find precedents both in information requests and IFAI resolutions, which help them to improve their responses to requests and compliance with the LAI.

The third electronic innovation developed is the Transparency Website (**Portal de Transparencia**, Portaltransparencia.gob.mx). The LAI mandates that each government agency publish certain basic information about its operations (such as directories, audits, budgets, rules of operation, etc.) through the Internet. The Por-Transparencia is a web system that organizes, systematizes and homogenizes the presentation of this information across agencies. Additionally, the web portal allows the user access to the majority of Executive Branch agency compliance with mandatory disclosure requirements in one single location. In other words, users are no longer required to consult each agency's individual website to access this important information.

The PortalTransparencia has registered more than 3 million visits in only 5 months of operation, which averages to approximately 15,000 searches per day. In average, 25% of them to the directory of public officials; 17% to salaries and benefits; 15 % to procurement and contracts; and 6% to authorizations, licenses and concessions. For instance, the PorTransparencia makes it possible to find out how many procurement contracts the National Oil Company, Pemex, has signed with IBM; but it also provides the number of contracts IBM has signed with all the agencies that integrate the Federal Public Administration.

MAIN RESULTS: RELIABILITY AND TRUST

The political culture in Mexico has led many citizens to distrust or even fear public authorities. So an important innovation of the recent LAI is that citizens are not required to identify themselves in order to request public information from the government. SISI-Infomex provides users with a considerable “protection” against the perceived power imbalance between the government and the citizenry, by allowing the submission of information requests through an electronic system where the user is in complete control over their personal information that can be accessed by government agencies. In short, SISI-Infomex increases citizen confidence in requesting information.

Additionally, ZOOM and PortalTransparencia facilitate access and address both of the above-mentioned problems, by *socializing* the public information already released by the government through the Internet. Not only do these search engines permit users to access previous information requests and mandatory basic information that may already contain what they are looking for, without having to submit their own request or travel to access information, but also allow users to maintain complete anonymity vis-à-vis the authority.

SISI-Infomex, ZOOM and PortalTransparencia have successfully generated citizen confidence in the information request process, due to the correct implementation of these three electronic systems. The vast majority of information requests submitted to date have been through SISI. At the same time, these information innovations have provided important tools essential to the IFAI’s own ability to fulfill its function. They also have encouraged a significant change in the “culture” of information access from the perspective of the government bureaucracy.

Therefore, these information tools address two major problems related to accessing public information in Mexico. The first is related to the extent to which federal government operations are centralized in Mexico City, and transportation and communication systems outside the city are unreliable and expensive. By providing citizens with an electronic system to request information and retrieve the agency’s response, search previous requests, and consult mandatory information through the Internet, these tools allow citizens the possibility of exercising their new information rights without having to travel to Mexico

City or rely on an inefficient postal service to deliver the requested information. These systems greatly reduce transaction costs for users.

At the same time, the political culture in Mexico has lead many citizens to distrust or even fear public authorities. Another important innovation of the recent LAI is that citizens are not required to identify themselves in order to request public information from the government. SISI-Infomex provides users with a considerable “protection” against the perceived power imbalance between the government and the citizenry, by allowing the submission of information requests through an electronic system where the user is in complete control over their personal information that can be accessed by government agencies. In short, SISI-Infomex increases citizen confidence in requesting information.

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From the perspective of the IFAI, whose job is the enforcement of the LAI in the Executive Branch, the use of electronic systems greatly facilitates monitoring of agency compliance, while reducing the cost of supervision. This is due to the ease of monitoring statistics and agency responses that these electronic systems provide. Because the IFAI can easily monitor trends and identify roadblocks to access, the Institut can quickly intervene to address problems as they arise. Therefore, in addition to facilitating access to government information from the perspective of citizens, these electronic innovations also serve to simplify and improve the IFAI’s ability to do its job effectively and efficiently.

At the same time, one of the biggest achievements of the implementation of these electronic systems is that their emphasis on *accessibility* and *publicity* has effected a significant change in bureaucratic culture in Mexico. Concurrent to the distrust and power imbalance perceived by citizens in relation to public authorities, bureaucrats in Mexico have historically expressed resistance to releasing information, due to a similar distrust and skepticism as to who is requesting information, and for what purpose it will eventually be

used. There had also previously been a notable preference to provide information discretionally, without allowing it to enter the public domain.

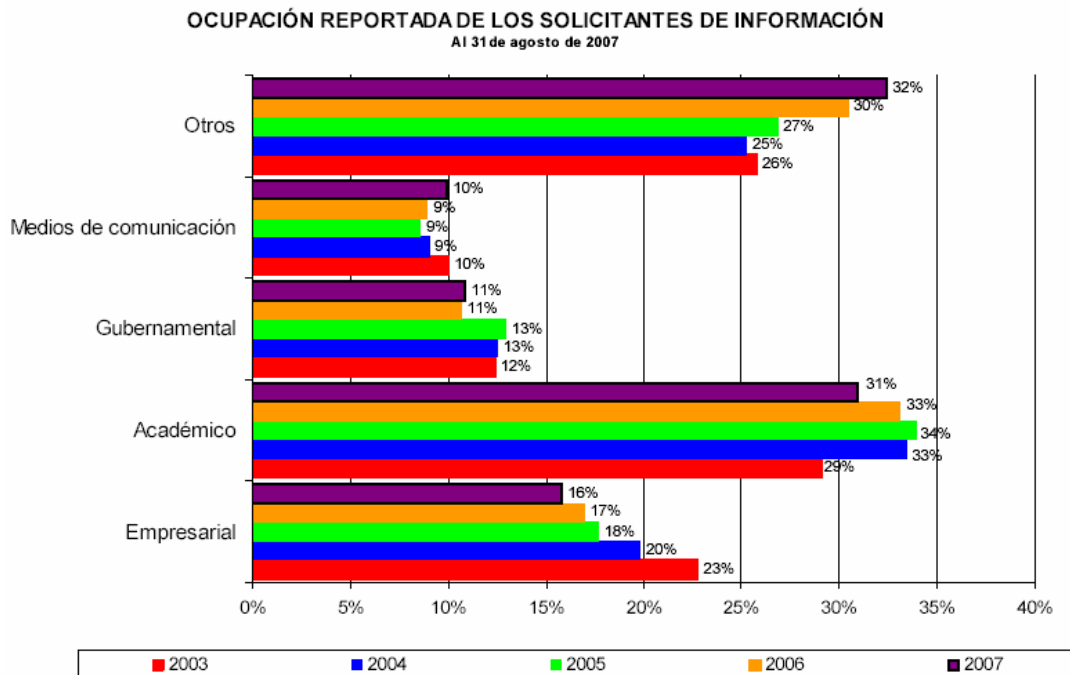
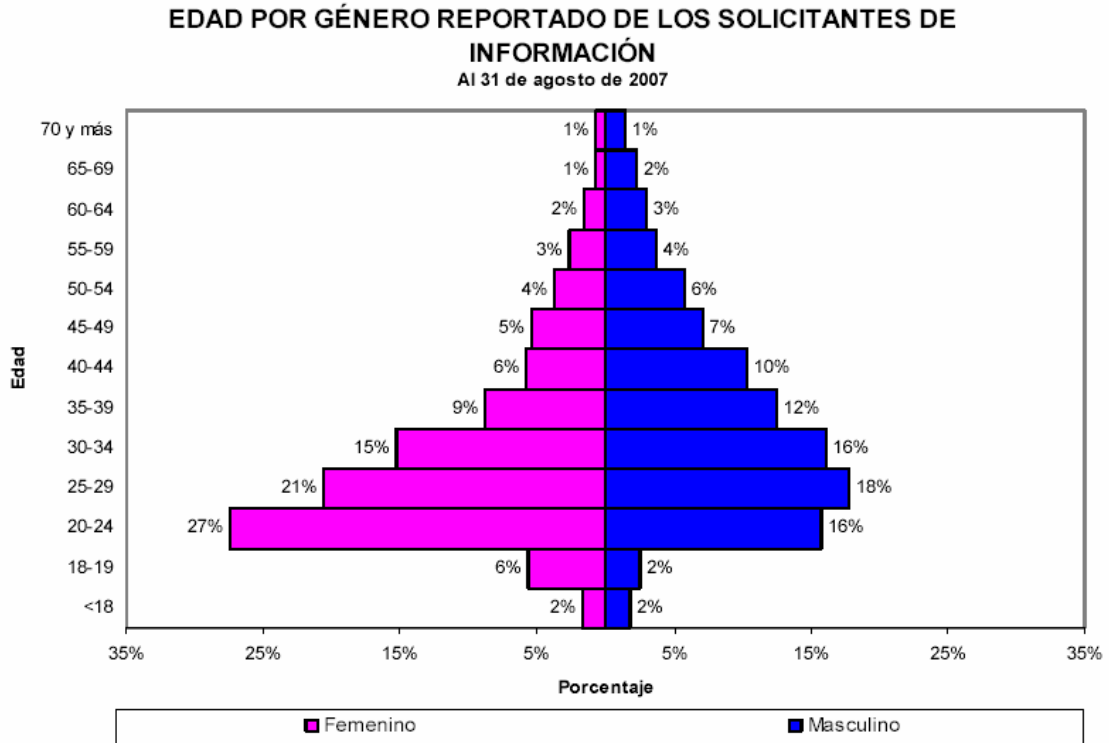
However, due to the LAI and electronic information access systems implemented in Mexico, the possibility of dwelling on questions of *who* is requesting information and *why* is now eliminated. An information request must be answered, when possible through the SISI system, and the only means through which government agencies can deny access is if the information requested falls under narrowly defined categories of classification. These classifications are often reviewed directly by the IFAI, further ensuring that a denial of information is legitimate. Hereford, it is no longer acceptable for government officials to deny access for fear of the motivation behind the request.

Additionally, the ZOOM and Por-Transparencia search engines fortify the *publicity* of government information, because of the ease in accessing previous requests, basic government information, and agency responses. This eliminates the tendency to provide information on a discretionary basis, by making it available to anyone interested in consulting it. The result is not only greater publicity of government information, removing previous cultural obstacles to access, but it has also shifted the debate *within* the bureaucracy toward viewing public access to government information in a new, less threatening light.

WHO BENEFITS FROM THE SYSTEM? DESCRIPTION OF THE USER POPULATION

As been said; anyone, anywhere in the world can access government information in Mexico through these electronic systems. The fact that requests are practically anonymous grants confidence to applicants. On the other hand, an accurate profile of users is hard to get: information available to IFAI is given by the applicants themselves, voluntarily and without rigorous verification (65% of users have spontaneously provided this information). Taking this limitation into account, the available profile shows that the average applicant is a young metropolitan male, with an income and education higher than the national average: 64% are male, 55% live in the Metropolitan area of Mexico City, 54% are between 20 and 34 years old, 32% locate professionally themselves in the

academic sector, 18% in the business sector, 12% are bureaucrats and 9% work in the media.



One important fact regards the concentration of the demand for public information. From June 2003 to August 2007, there were only 92,000 SISI users and only five thousand

accounted for 50% of the requests. Four hundred and fifty users made 25% of the total number of requests and 170 users made 17% of the total.

This means that less than 13,000 users have made almost two thirds of the total number of the requests at the federal level. We will come back to this problem at the end of the note.

Registered users to file electronic applications

October 14th de 2007

Ranks	Number of users	Total requests	
1 request	68,306	68,306	28.2%
2 requests	11,745	23,490	9.7%
3 - 5 requests	7,671	27,807	11.5%
6 - 10 requests	2,585	19,136	7.9%
11 - 20 requests	1,317	19,327	8.0%
21 - 50 requests	786	24,362	10.1%
51 - 100 requests	274	18,785	7.8%
101 - 200 requests	102	14,643	6.1%
201 - 300 requests	36	8,682	3.6%
301 – 400 requests	16	5,274	2.2%
401 and over	16	11,981	5.0%

LESSONS AND IMPACTS

The first major impact these systems have produced, is that they provide important tools not only to requestors to facilitate the submission of information requests, but they also drastically increase the efficiency of government response. The ease of responding to information requests through SISI greatly reduces the transaction costs for government agencies in this process. Additionally, ZOOM and Por-Transparencia, by making it easier for interested parties to consult previously released public information, also reduces labor costs on government agencies to implement the new law.

Secondly, by directly confronting many of the afore-mentioned obstacles to citizen use of the law, during the last 4 years, information requests have shed light on a large number of government operations previously shrouded in secrecy. One example is related to the

infamous “bank rescue” in the mid-90s. Despite high levels of government resistance to disclose this information, through a series of citizen requests and subsequent appeals, the IFAI was able to mandate that the Savings & Loan Institute (IPAB for its acronym in Spanish) release records related to the decision-making process that resulted in the privatization of the banking system. Other examples include: the publicity of files related to Federal investigations into crimes committed during the “dirty war”; the mandate that the Treasury Ministry publish relevant information about public funds transferred to public-private trust funds; publicity of government transfers to labor unions such as the teachers’ union and petroleum workers union; and formulas for the calculation of official economic projections.

Again, since the use of these electronic tools is demand-driven, these examples show that the citizen demand for this type of information has been successfully satisfied by the implementation of the LAI in Mexico to date, where the use of electronic tools has been the central strength behind information disclosure. All of these examples have resulted from citizen requests and subsequent appeals, which have allowed the IFAI to mandate the release of information previously unimaginable in Mexico. Because of the highly sensitive nature of the information requested in the above-listed examples, one can imagine that if requestors were required to identify themselves to the agency, or physically enter the government office to get the information requested, fear of reappraisals could have prevented them from submitting the request in the first place. Because of SISI and its intermediary capacity between the requestor and the government, these requests were made possible. At the same time, now that the information has been mandated to be made public, ZOOM and Por-Transparencia permit other interested parties to consult this information, again without fear of reappraisal or identification by the agency.

The Annenberg School of Communications of the University of Pennsylvania produced a report in February, 2006 that highlights the high degree of citizen satisfaction with SISI, and its importance for guaranteeing the efficient use of the new LAI in Mexico. The report is called, *The Federal Institute for Access to Information in Mexico and a Culture of Transparency*, available at <http://www.global.asc.upenn.edu/index.php?page=32>.

More recently, these information tools has been chosen as one of the "Top 20" programs of the 2007 IBM Innovations Award in Transforming Government, administered by the

Ash Institute for Democratic Governance and Innovation at the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University. This award, given on the occasion of the 20th Anniversary of the Innovations in American Government Awards program, marked the first opportunity for the most transformative government programs from across the globe. As a “Top 20” finalist, the Mexican program joined a select group of initiatives, whose accomplishments warrant this special recognition (www.innovations.harvard.edu).

WEAKNESSES

One of the main shortcomings of these 3 electronic tools for accessing public information in Mexico is directly related to the complexity of the technology itself, and its usability for a wide audience with differing levels of experience using computers and the Internet. It will be extremely important that future developments in these tools take into account the need to keep the technical aspects of their usability as simple as possible, to increase their usability for a broad audience.

Secondly, these systems are currently limited to the Federal Government, and access to information at the local level is limited only to those states and municipalities who have chosen to adopt Infomex to date. SISI should be integrated into Infomex to permit users access to public information about all levels of government in any state through one portal.

Thirdly, while SISI allows the IFAI to monitor agency responses to a limited extent, it does not allow them to verify the *quality* and *relevance* of the information provided by agencies in response to the specific information request presented. This presents a serious limitation to the IFAI’s ability to monitor agency compliance with the LAI, as they are limited to ensuring that agencies reply within the time limit established, and in the manner requested by the user. Full monitoring of compliance with LAI mandates would also require verification that the information provided through SISI meets the demands of the original request.

THE CHALLENGE OF DISSEMINATION

It is obvious that the concentration of the demand undermines the positive effects of the right to know in Mexico. In general, it is accepted that freedom of access changes the behavior of public authorities when they know they are observed or supervised. A large number of citizens applying for government information increase the social pressure on public servants as a system of decentralized social control. However, this phenomenon can hardly be fully credited in Mexico to this date, where 92,000 users cannot match the needs of more than 105 million inhabitants. Dissemination of the right to information is, among others, one of the big challenges of the IFAI in the short run.

That being said, with public deliberation sessions at IFAI, and given that frequently the people requesting information are journalists and specialized civil society organizations, many cases have reached large audiences due to the public attention that they receive. This attention has generated in many occasions media follow-ups, including front-page articles in the main newspapers, and pressure from public opinion. In other words, having a story related to governmental information in the front page of many national papers for a number of days has a clear multiplying effect on the impact of access. This has forced the government to correct or cancel some programs once opacity, excesses or corruption was revealed. For instance, the Office of the President ceased buying expensive clothes for the First Lady and the shopping list of previous acquisitions was revealed, due to a request for information. The expenses, use and destiny of the budget to finance the transition between administrations is now public, thanks to the publicity generated by another request for information. There is greater control on grants and financial donations to unions and non-governmental groups. Access to information concerning the financial management of public trusts is now possible. Criteria and allocations of subsidies are now disclosed at the community level; military procurement is now public. These are only a few of the many success stories that were made possible thanks to media requests, coverage and follow-up.

Social pressure for disclosure of government records is a new element in the equation for fighting impunity and corruption, one we would like to help strengthen. In this sense, it is essential to encourage demand for information on the part of strategic social actors, as well as to help reporters involved into investigative journalism, civil society groups that

could enhance their performance with the tool of access to information, or businessmen involved with provision of goods and services to government and procurement.

Looking to the other side of the social spectrum and driven by these concerns, since August 2005, IFAI launched the *Proyecto Comunidades* with the support of the William & Flora Hewlett Foundation. This program seeks to identify the best strategy for dissemination of the right to know and the use of the LAI within marginalized social groups, that is, social groups that under normal conditions would not be able to exert this fundamental right. After two years of activities, results of the Communities Program indicate that these groups can search, gather and obtain the technical and human resources to request information. However, one necessary condition is that their efforts be accompanied by a grass-root organization which they can trust.

Up to September 2007, 20 organizations from 7 states have participated in the Program. They have linked the right to information to various substantial and diverse activities: environment, productive projects, intra-family violence, sustainable economic activities, and human rights, among other. Beneficiaries of the Program are also diverse: teenage groups, women, children in schools and street children, farmers, artisans, educators, prisoners, municipal authorities and indigenous people who can only speak *nahuatl* and *mixteco*.

Some of the experiences are worth mentioning here. In the city of Monterrey, *Ciudadanos en Apoyo a los Derechos Humanos* (CADHAC), is working with federal prisoners. A study from 2005¹ reports that 46% of the prison population do not have any information regarding their behavior status and detected that the unit in charge of updating this information did not responded requests, especially related to early release due to good conduct. In this context, CADHAC helped prisoners to use the LAI and submit applications to request personal records containing the files of each of the prisoners and the status of the anticipated process for freedom. The Public Security Department denied access to the requests, so the applicants filed a complaint to the IFAI. Thus, simply by using the LAI and obtaining IFAI's intervention, some of the procedures went forward after months and in somecases years of stalemate.

¹ Ciudadanos en Apoyo a los Derechos Humanos, *Diagnóstico de la Situación de Derechos Humanos en el sistema penitenciario de Nuevo León, 2005*.

In the State of Jalisco, the *Colectivo Ecologista* supported a local community's efforts to obtain information regarding the territorial status of their land. In spite of pressure from commercial developers, the land-owners decided to reject offers to sell, kept their properties and formed an association in order to sponsor projects dealing with natural resources protection and ecologically friendly development.

The *Instituto Mexicano de Desarrollo Comunitario* in Jalisco, requested information on federal concessions for timber and wood industry production. The responses they received made possible to identify the monopolist distribution of the forest exploitation. This information was the seed for the development of a project for environment protection and forest conservation that brought together land-owners, community leaders, local government authorities and environmental groups.

In Veracruz, the *Centro de Servicios Municipales Heriberto Jara* requested information related to the allocation criteria of federal regional funds for municipal development. The information was obtained after appealing to IFAI, and this experience has set a precedent that has showed other municipalities how to get information on the distribution of federal resources for local development.

In the State of Mexico, *Guardianes de los Volcanes* requested information on urbanization plans in a strategic area of water resources. This organization discovered that, in spite of the federal restrictions for construction due to the need for water conservation in the hydrologic zone, a big housing construction company owned 22% of the authorizations for the exploitation of the resources. The community, lead by *Guardianes*, organized various strategies, from public demonstrations to legal actions in order to expose the irregularities of the process.

On those accounts, the periodical magazine *Cambio* reported recently (September 2007): "Among the most prominent results are from the organizations from the state of Puebla, where there was great interest on the part of the Nahuatl, Popoloc, and Mixtec communities, mainly among students in tele-secondary school and high school. The right to information enabled them to learn of the conditions of the programs that provide support in health and productive organizations."

Among the achievements of this Program, some deserve special attention: under certain circumstances, these groups have started an incipient appropriation process of the right to know; at the same time, there has been a strengthening of the group identity through processes of auto diagnosis and the search for solutions by the communities. In the process, the use of the LAI has proven to be an effective tool for empowerment. Finally, the organizations have develop skills for the use of public information within more general strategies aimed at increasing the well being of the communities and empowering them in the relationship with local and federal authorities. The replication of these lessons is a grand public policy challenge for the access to Information Authority, for the right to know can only meet the challenge of empowerment when used by citizens. Magazine Cambio reported: *“Thanks to the tools of transparency, in the communities that are lagging furthest behind socially, social assistance programs are now implemented punctually”*.

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TECHNICAL BOXES: CONCEPTION OF THE TOOLS, CHRONOLOGY OF IMPLEMENTATION AND BUDGET FEATURES

1. Original conception of the tools

In the case of SISI, the LAI clearly established the need to develop technologies that would facilitate citizens' exercise of their new information rights, making it clear that a new electronic system was needed to comply with the mandates of the law. Conceived at IFAI by Commissioner José-Octavio López, the Ministry of Audits and Administrative Development of the Federal Government took charge of developing the technology behind SISI, which was transferred in its entirety to the IFAI on 2004.

In the case of Portal-Transparencia, the IFAI has consistently monitored agency compliance with the mandatory disclosure requirements established in the LAI. Through this monitoring and evaluation process, the IFAI detected deficiencies across agencies in terms of both the quality and accessibility of the information published in compliance with the mandate. The General Direction for Coordination and Monitoring of the Federal Public Administration coordinated with a small technological development firm to create the standardized format for Por-Transparencia. Through the technology developed in this process, the ZOOM search engine was also made possible.

In terms of outside actors who have played a significant role in the conception, development and implementation of these 3 electronic tools for information access, across all 3 projects civil society, local governments, and users have participated in improving their usability.

In the case of the ZOOM search engine, the development of the technology and implementation of the system was in direct response to user demand to improve the *searchability* of previous information requests, IFAI resolutions and related documentation. Civil society actors and system users were active participants in the development of the search engine, helping to define search criteria and characteristics for the presentation of search results that would prove most useful to meet their needs. The strongest supporters of this search engine are those civil society actors and academics integrated into the network, at www.derechoasaber.org.mx.

Infomex has been implemented in response to demand by local governments to provide users accessible means for requesting information at the state and municipal levels.

The strongest criticism of these 3 electronic tools to date has come from a civil society organization whose goal is to evaluate electronic systems from the perspective of usability. The Center for the Study of Usability recently released an evaluation noting that these systems still require that users take several steps to reach the information they desire, and a relatively large “learning curve” for their correct use. They also showed that these tools are highly technical, especially in terms of a general audience relatively unfamiliar with the Internet.

2. Policy development chronology

Chronology of implementation:

SISI:

LAI passed:	2002
SISI open to the public:	June 12 th , 2003
IFAI Data Center:	May, 2005

Portal-Transparencia:

Project conception and initiation:	December 15 th , 2005
Implementation:	February 15 th , 2007
Compilation of data:	September, 2007

ZOOM:

Project initiation:	October, 2006
Implementation:	January 15th, 2007

INFOMEX:

Mexico City:	October 31 st , 2006
Chihuahua:	January 1st, 2007
Municipality SP Garza García:	October 15 th , 2006
Municipality Mexicali:	March 26th, 2007

Nuevo León: August 15th, 2007
Baja California, Jalisco (State and Municipalities),
Veracruz, Coahuila, municipalities of Puebla, Durango and Monterrey:
Early 2008

Over time, the IFAI's strategy to implement and improve these tools has continuously evolved in response to demand and accumulated experience. The main goals have been to improve the usability of these tools, while engaging in active publicity campaigns to increase awareness and demand.

The main future goal is to implement Infomex in as many state and local governments as possible. Currently, projects are underway to transfer Infomex to the states of Jalisco, Aguascalientes, Baja California and Nuevo León. On the municipal level, Monterrey and the city of Durango have also requested the technology. In Jalisco, two municipalities have also requested the technology, and in Aguascalientes the technology will apply to all branches of government, as well as municipalities.

3. Current operating budget

Any incurred cost related to the implementation of these technologies is paid for out of the IFAI's annual budget. The total annual operating for the entirety of the IFAI is approximately 20 million USD. The total costs for each of the three electronic innovations described above are the following:

SISI

The development of the technology was paid for by the Ministry of Audits and Administrative Development. Costs incurred by the IFAI for the operation and maintenance of the system are in the form of staff time dedicated to ensure its correct implementation. They are: 1 Department Head (full time dedicated to SISI) starting May, 2005, and 1 Department Head (part-time dedicated to SISI).

Por-Transparencia

The development of the technology, for which the IFAI contracted an external development company, was completed at a total cost of approximately \$324,000 USD. The purchase of relevant Internet software cost approximately \$18,100 USD, for a total of \$342,100 USD investment in technology. Human resources costs are: 1 Department Head (full time dedicated to Por-Transparencia) starting February, 2006, 2 Department Heads (full time dedicated to technical assistance to government agencies), and during the design and implementation phase also included were 1 Department Vice-Head (full time), and 1 Area Director and 1 General Director (part time).

ZOOM

The technology for the ZOOM search engine was acquired through the technology developed in Por-Transparencia. Human resources costs were: 2 Department Heads and 1 Assistant Director (full time, 3 months).
